

The Free Press

G. W. & G. E. BENEDICT.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.

FRIDAY MORNING, MARCH 21, 1862.

FOR COUNCIL OF CENSORS.

Addition. C. H. BARNES, Bristol.

Benjamin. L. BARNES, Bristol.

Caldwell. E. H. BARNES, Bristol.

Chambers. E. H. BARNES, Bristol.

Clark. E. H. BARNES, Bristol.

Clegg. E. H. BARNES, Bristol.

Coffey. E. H. BARNES, Bristol.

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its rapid decline and disappearance from the area of national politics. That may be, but it will only be when slavery has disappeared from the land.

But further, the *Sentinel* boldly places itself among the defenders of the institution. Its article concludes as follows:

"If we defend it (slavery) against the assaults of the Abolitionists, it is not for its own sake, but simply because it is one of the rights of our fellow citizens of the South under the one common national Constitution, which guarantees all to them, and to us all whatever civil and political rights to enjoy."

"Right!" We wonder what idea the *Sentinel* attaches to the word "rights." It means that a process from a court in Vermont or New York, cannot reach any person committed against a person held as a slave in Virginia or South Carolina, there is no dispute. But if it means that slavery is a right, according to the law of God, as revealed in his word, or as written on the conscience of man, it means that none in this or any other Christian land, except those whose intellects are woefully beclouded and whose consciences are crushed over by the prejudices of many years, will agree to for a moment. But as to the guarantee of slavery, which the Constitution gives to "our fellow citizens of the South," and which the *Sentinel* is so anxious to preserve—will the *Sentinel* oblige us by quoting for our benefit and that of its readers generally, the words in the Constitution, which guarantee slavery in any form or degree to any State or to any body whatever? We don't want the dicta of Toombs, or Davis, or Mason, or Seward, or the opinions of Judge Daniel, or of Judge Taney, even, and the interpretations and glosses of any of the "scribes and calumniators." Now, if the *Sentinel* means that in the use of the words "a thousand times," we put the numerical ratio of its proslavery sentiment as compared with its Union sentiment too high, may we be allowed to make a little something, for good neighborly sake. We used the phrase comparatively, to indicate that the *Sentinel* and the other papers referred to have shown a great deal more anxiety for the preservation of slavery than they have for the Union. We shall be injured. And for the proof of that, we can safely refer to their columns. Who that reads the *Sentinel* does not know that its condemnation of the rebellion and of the rebels has been in a half-way apologetic tone, and coupled with an intense condemnation of Abolitionism and Republicans, charging them with being the guilty cause of it all. Where can any one find in the *Sentinel* any denunciation of the avowed object of the rebels, viz. to found in a severed portion of the Union a confederacy whose "corner stone," as the Vice President of the confederacy declares, shall be that the African race shall be slaves to the whites? Who can find in the *Sentinel* a hearty expression even, to the effect that if slavery exists in the way of a preservation of the nation in its entirety, it must be swept away, by force of the national arms, if there be no other way of doing it?

For many years the *Sentinel* has been thoroughly hostile to those who were opponents of slavery and slavery extension, and has given freely its sympathies and aid to those who were avowed friends of slavery and eager to extend it and to increase its power in the nation, and in this respect we see no essential change in it for the better. Its denunciations of Abolitionism and Republicanism since the outbreak of the rebellion have been as loud and long and constant as ever. Judging by the tone of the amount of ink the *Sentinel* has expended in fighting the enemies of slavery, and that expended in fighting the enemies of this Union, we perhaps ought not to have said that it was more than fifty times as fearful lest slavery should take some detriment as that the Union should be injured; and to that extent we are willing to stand corrected.

True, the *Sentinel* wants the rebellion ended, but ended in such a way that Republicanism shall gain nothing in the process—in other words, that slavery shall be left unharmed, and just as potent for evil as ever.

The *Sentinel* says: "The Free Press, in its advocacy of radical and Abolitionian Republicanism, and in its eagerness at the rapid decline of its party, resort to the use of ill-natured and false charges against its opponents." We have never knowingly made a false charge against the *Sentinel* or any one else, and as for being "ill-natured" in our remarks, we are unconscious of anything of the sort. We do not pretend that the Editor of the *Sentinel* is not sincere in his opinions, nor that he does not aim to maintain them by arguments which satisfy his own mind; and in condemning his opinions on this subject and combating his arguments, we claim the same consciousness from him. We do not misrepresent the *Sentinel* in what we say. We need not go out of the bounds of the very number of that paper which contains the accusation we have quoted—the *Sentinel* of the 14th inst.

We find sufficient evidence of the *Sentinel*'s real position in the fact that it cannot even disclaim attachment to slavery as a social and political blessing, without coupling with its disclaimer an attack on the "Abolitionists," the virulence of which shows clearly on which side the *Sentinel*'s sympathies lie. Take the following sample:

"It (slavery) is no favorite of ours, and it never was. It is one of the rights of our fellow citizens of the South under the one common national Constitution, which guarantees all to them, and to us all whatever civil and political rights to enjoy."

And then follows a half column of the usual absurd charges which form the stock in trade of the proslavery press, such as that "but for the abolitionists, in all probability Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, and probably others would at this moment either have been altogether rid of it, or in process of becoming so." Such a statement shows an ignorance of the changes and state of sentiment on the subject of slavery in the southern states, that is astonishing to one familiar with the history of affairs in the south during the last forty years. But "northern abolitionists" says the *Sentinel* "began to interfere" and the result is the rebellion. All the lessons of the past, it says, "teach us that if we wish well to the slave and really desire his emancipation, our best way to bring it about, is to leave the matter alone to be cared for by the people among whom negro slavery exists." That is just what the upholders of every wrong have always said: "you let alone, find no fault; stop showing up what you call the evils of our system—it is none of your business—give us none of your arguments—we know what we are about; if you will do and say nothing at all, but leave us to have our way in everything, we will rectify all wrongs when we get ready."

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